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ABSTRACT

This report provides information about the use of guns by children and adolescents, with related information on juvenile homicides and suicides. The annual number of juveniles killed with a firearm increased substantially between 1987 and 1993 as occurrences of other types of homicide remained constant. Since 1980, one in four murders of juveniles involved a juvenile offender, the victims being generally acquaintances killed with a firearm. Boys and girls tend to kill different types of victims, and black juveniles have been more likely than youth of other races to commit murders with firearms. A survey by the National Institute of Justice of arrested and detained individuals shows the prevalence of firearm use among juvenile respondents. A new survey, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, interviewed 9,000 youths aged 12 to 16 in 1996, and will follow this cohort as they make the transition from school to work. Findings to date show the connection between handgun carrying and other problem behavior. Firearms are also linked with youth suicide. In 1996, 7% of suicides involved youth age 19 or younger. In fact, for every two young people murdered in 1996, one youth committed suicide. Child homicide and suicide rates in the United States exceed rates for other industrialized countries, and this is particularly true for deaths involving firearms. (Contains 11 figures.) (SLD)

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MARCH 2000

1999 NATIONAL REPORT SERIES

Juvenile Justice Bulletin

Shay Bilchik, Administrator

Kids and Guns

As the Nation moves into the 21st century, the reduction of juvenile crime, violence, and victimization constitutes one of the most crucial challenges of the new millennium. To meet that challenge, reliable information is essential. Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report *offers a comprehensive overview of these pervasive problems and the response of the juvenile justice system. The* National Report *brings together statistics from a variety of sources on a wide array of topics, presenting the information in clear, nontechnical text enhanced by more than 350 easy-to-read tables, graphs, and maps.*

This Bulletin series is designed to give readers quick, focused access to some of the most critical findings from the wealth of data in the National Report. *Each Bulletin in the series highlights selected themes at the forefront of juvenile justice policymaking and extracts relevant* National Report *sections (including selected graphs and tables).*

Administrator's Message

Guns kill. In many cases, guns kill our children. Sometimes the guns are fired by other juveniles, often by acquaintances or family members. This Bulletin, drawn from *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*, provides an overview of the national statistics that show the devastating impact that the availability of guns has had on the lives and well-being of American youth.

While other types of homicide remained constant, the number of juveniles killed with a firearm increased greatly between 1987 and 1993. A close look at the numbers shows that the rise in murders of juveniles from the mid-1980's through the 1993 peak year was *all* firearm related, as was the subsequent decline in juvenile murders that occurred between 1993 and 1997.

Guns play a large role in suicides as well. Families, teachers, and friends have virtually no chance to reach out to youth in desperate need of help when that desperation is signaled by the immediate and often fatal impact of a gunshot wound. Statistics show that for every two youth age 19 or younger murdered in 1996, one youth committed suicide. The rate of youth suicides involving a firearm increased 39% between 1980 and 1994, and although firearm-involved suicides declined 19% from 1994 to 1996, these numbers are still much too high.

Despite these sobering statistics, it is important to remember that there are steps we can take to make our children and our communities safer. In fact, a number of communities have made progress in countering the threat of gun-related violence by bringing together law enforcement, elected officials, prosecutors, judges, schools, community organizations, and citizens to develop their own comprehensive, strategic violence prevention plan. The experiences of these communities are described in the OJJDP publication *Promising Strategies To Reduce Gun Violence*. This OJJDP Report provides a wealth of practical information and tools that communities can use to develop their own firearm violence reduction programs.

The recent decline in firearm-related juvenile homicides and suicides is encouraging and reinforces the need to remain vigilant in keeping handguns and other weapons out of the hands of children. Rational gun control policies, community involvement in schools, better relationships between law enforcement agencies and communities, support for parents in supervising and disciplining their children, and help for teens in despair are all approaches that we can use in our efforts to reduce the illegal use of firearms by juveniles.

Shay Bilchik
Administrator

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The rise in murders of juveniles between 1984 and 1993 was all firearm related, as was the subsequent decline

The increase in juvenile homicides is tied to firearm use by nonfamily offenders

A study of the 65% increase in juvenile homicides in the 7-year period from 1987 to 1993 shows that increases did not occur proportionately in all types of homicides. Over this period, homicides by family members held constant, while homicides by acquaintances increased substantially. The increase was disproportionate for black victims, with the growth in the number of black victims twice that of white victims. Most significantly, nearly all of the growth in juvenile homicides was in the number of older juveniles killed with firearms.

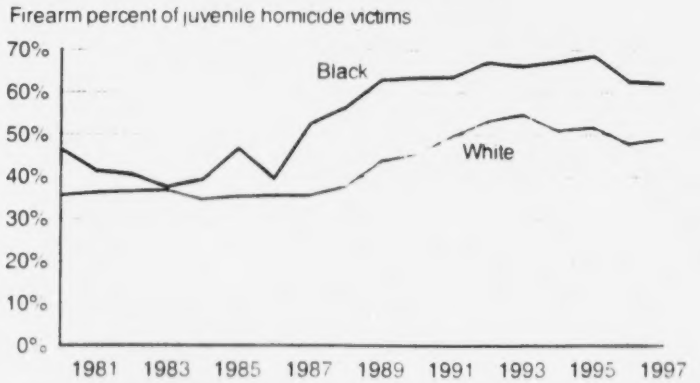
The decline in juvenile homicides between 1993 and 1997 brought the number to a level just 20% above that of 1987 (the last year in which juvenile homicides were within their historic range). Both the decline from 1993 to 1997 and the growth from 1987 to 1993 involved substantial changes in the number of murders by acquaintances and in the number of murders of older youth and black youth. The proportion of homicides committed with a firearm, which had increased dramatically between 1987 and 1993, however, did not decline between 1993 and 1997. Therefore, the major legacy of the growth in juvenile homicides from 1987 through 1993 is that it increased the proportion of juveniles killed by firearms.

The annual number of juveniles killed with a firearm increased substantially between 1987 and 1993, while other types of homicide remained constant

- In 1980, fewer than half (41%) of the juveniles murdered were killed with a firearm. The proportion of juvenile firearm homicides began to increase in 1987 and peaked (at 61%) in 1993. Since then, the proportion has declined somewhat, with 56% of juvenile homicides involving a firearm in 1997.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Supplementary Homicide Reports* for the years 1980–1997 [machine-readable data files]

The use of firearms in juvenile homicides was common in the 1990's for both black victims and white victims



- In the early 1980's, proportions of juvenile homicides involving a firearm were roughly equal for white victims and black victims.
- The proportion of black juvenile homicides involving a firearm increased substantially during a 3-year period in the late 1980's.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Supplementary Homicide Reports* for the years 1980–1997 [machine-readable data files]

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Homicides of juveniles ages 15 to 17 were more likely to involve a firearm than were homicides of adults

- Over the 10-year period from 1987 to 1997, the proportion of homicides committed with a firearm increased in most victim age groups.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Supplementary Homicide Reports* for the years 1980–1997 [machine-readable data files]

Between 1980 and 1997, 3 out of 4 murdered juveniles age 12 or older were killed with a firearm

	Age of victim				Victim ages 0–17	
Weapon	0–17	0–5	6–11	12–17	Males	Females
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Firearm	51	10	42	75	60	31
Knife/blunt object	14	11	19	15	13	17
Personal*	19	48	11	3	15	27
Other	16	30	28	7	12	25

- Nearly half (48%) of all murdered children below age 6 were killed by offenders using only their hands, fists, or feet.
- Male murder victims were nearly twice as likely as female victims to be killed with a firearm.

* Personal includes hands, fists, or feet.

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Supplementary Homicide Reports* for the years 1980–1997 [machine-readable data files]

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Since 1980, 1 in 4 murders of juveniles involved a juvenile offender

Nearly 38,000 juveniles were murdered between 1980 and 1997. A juvenile offender was involved in 26% of these crimes when an offender was identified. In murders of juveniles by juveniles, about 1 of every 6 also involved an adult offender. Between 1980 and 1997, the victim and the offender were the same race in 91% of murders of juveniles by juveniles.

The proportion of juvenile murders that involved a juvenile offender increased from 21% in 1980 to 33% in 1994—the peak year for all murders by juveniles. In 1980, an estimated 400 juveniles were killed by other juveniles, growing to nearly 900 in 1994; by 1997, this figure had fallen to about 500, or about 1 of every 4 juveniles murdered that year.

When juveniles kill juveniles, the victims are generally acquaintances killed with a firearm

Of juveniles killed by other juveniles between 1980 and 1997, 13% were under age 6. In nearly half of these murders (47%), the juvenile offender was the parent of the victim. In another 18%, the juvenile offender was another family member. Firearms were rarely used when the victim was under age 6 (10%).

Of juveniles killed by other juveniles, 63% were age 15 or older. Fewer than 5% of these older juvenile victims were killed by family members; 76% were killed by acquaintances and 19% were killed by strangers. Between 1980 and 1997, 77% of these older juveniles were killed with a firearm.

All of the increase in homicides by juveniles between the mid-1980's and mid-1990's was firearm related

It is difficult to assess the exact number of murders committed by juveniles

Based on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Supplemental Homicide Report (SHR) data, 18,200 persons were murdered in the U.S. in 1997—the lowest number in more than a generation. Of these murders, about 1,400 were determined by law enforcement to involve a juvenile offender; however, the actual number is greater than this. In 1997, the FBI had no information on the offender(s) for about 6,900 reported murders (38% of the total). These may have been homicides for which no one was arrested or the offender was otherwise not identified, or these may have been cases for which the local agency did not report complete information to the FBI. Regardless, the number of murders committed by juveniles in 1997 was undoubtedly greater than 1,400, but just how much greater is difficult to determine. If it were assumed that the murders without offender information were similar to those with offender information, then about 2,300 murders (or 12% of all murders) in 1997 had at least one offender who was under the age of 18 at the time of the crime.

The 1,400 murders known to involve a juvenile offender in 1997 involved about 1,700 juveniles and 900 adults. Of all murders involving a juvenile, 31% also involved an adult, and 13% involved another juvenile. In all, 44% of all murders involving a juvenile involved more than one person.

Whom do juveniles kill?

Between 1980 and 1997, most victims in homicides involving juveniles were male (83%). Slightly more victims were white (50%) than black (47%). In 27% of homicides by juveniles, the victim was also a juvenile. Victims in 70% of homicides by juveniles were killed with a firearm. Of all victims killed by juveniles, 14% were family members, 55% were acquaintances, and 31% were strangers.

Who are the juvenile murderers?

Between 1980 and 1997, the large majority (93%) of known juvenile homicide offenders were male. More than half (56%) were black. Of known juvenile homicide offenders, 42% were age 17, 29% were age 16, and 17% were age 15; 88% of juvenile homicide offenders were age 15 or older.

Murders by the very young are rare

Annually between 1980 and 1997, fewer than 10 juveniles age 10 or younger were identified as participants in murders—a figure that has remained essentially constant over the time period. The majority of these young homicide offenders were male (88%), and more than half (54%) were black. In these cases, the victim was equally likely to be either a family member or an acquaintance (43%). A firearm was involved in 50% of the murders committed by these young offenders.

The sharp decline in homicides by juveniles between 1994 and 1997 was attributable entirely to a decline in homicides by firearm

- Between 1980 and 1987, firearms were used in just over half (54%) of all homicides involving a juvenile offender. Then firearm-related homicides began to increase, so that, by 1994, most homicides by juvenile offenders (82%) involved the use of a firearm.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Supplementary Homicide Reports* for the years 1980–1997 [machine-readable data files]

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Boys and girls tend to kill different types of victims

Between 1980 and 1997, 54% of male juvenile homicide offenders killed an acquaintance, 37% killed a stranger, and 9% killed a family member. In comparison, the victims of females were more likely to be family members (39%) and far less likely to be strangers (15%).

Between 1980 and 1997, about 1% of male offenders killed persons under age 6, while 18% of the female offenders killed young children. Because there were so many more male offenders than female offenders, however, roughly equal numbers of male and female juvenile offenders were involved in the murder of young children. Annually between 1980 and 1997, about 25 male and 25 female juvenile offenders were tied to the death of a child under age 6.

Males were far more likely than females to kill with a firearm. Between 1980 and 1997, 73% of male juvenile homicide offenders used a firearm, while 14% used a knife. In contrast, 41% of female juvenile homicide offenders used a firearm and 32% used a knife. While 27% of females used other means to kill (e.g., hands or feet, strangulation, drowning, or fire), only 13% of males killed by these means.

Black juveniles were more likely to commit murders with firearms than were youth of other races

In the U.S. in 1997, about 1 of every 16,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 17 was identified as participating in a homicide. This is a rate of 56 known offenders for every 1 million youth in the U.S. population ages 10–17. This rate was greater for black youth than youth of other races: black (194), Asian/Pacific Islanders (44), American Indians (34), and whites (30).

Between 1980 and 1997, 72% of black juvenile homicide offenders used a firearm in their crimes. This proportion was higher than that for Asian/Pacific Islander (67%), white (59%), or American Indian (48%) youth.

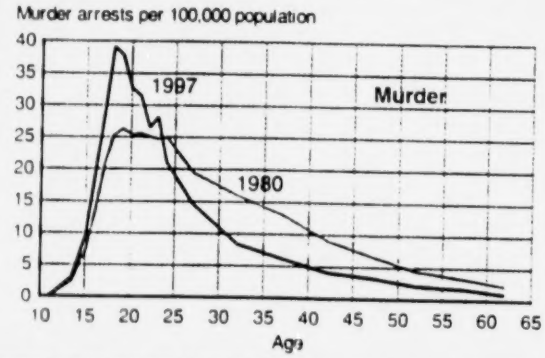
Youth were most likely to kill persons of their own race. Between 1980 and 1997, 81% of juvenile offenders were involved in murders of persons of their own race. Same-race killing was most common for white youth (90%) and less common for blacks (76%), Asian/Pacific Islanders (58%), and American Indians (48%).

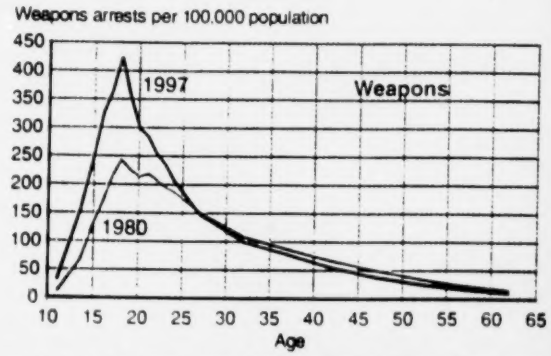
A greater proportion of white youth and American Indian youth killed family members than did youth of other races: American Indian (17%), white (16%), black (7%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (7%).

Growth in murders by juveniles is linked to weapon use

Relevant to an understanding of juvenile murder arrest trends is the link between murder rates and weapon use. The relationship of the murder age-arrest curves for 1980 and 1997 is similar to that for weapons law violations. (See murder graph and weapons graph.) For murders, the rates were lower in 1997 than in 1980 for all persons above age 25, but there were substantial increases in murder rates among juveniles and young adults. The age-specific arrest rate trend profile for weapons violations is comparable to that for murder, showing large increases for juveniles and young adults.

Age-specific arrest rate trends for murder are similar to those for weapons violations





Source: Authors' analysis of arrest data from an unpublished FBI report for 1980 and from *Crime in the United States 1997* and population data from the Bureau of the Census for 1980 from *Current Population Reports*, P25-1095 and for 1997 from *Estimates of the population of States by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin: 1997* [machine-readable data file]

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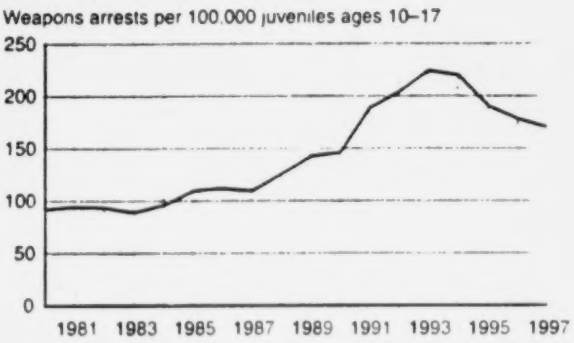
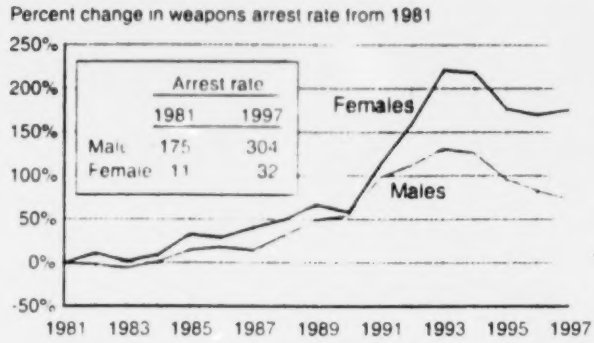
Juvenile arrest rates for weapons, which increased sharply during the late 1980's and early 1990's, began declining in the mid-1990's

The juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations doubled in the 6-year period between 1987 and 1993



- The decline between 1993 and 1997 brought the juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations to its lowest level since 1990, but the rate was still 55% above the 1987 level.

Female arrest rates for weapons law violations nearly tripled between 1981 and 1997, while the male rate nearly doubled



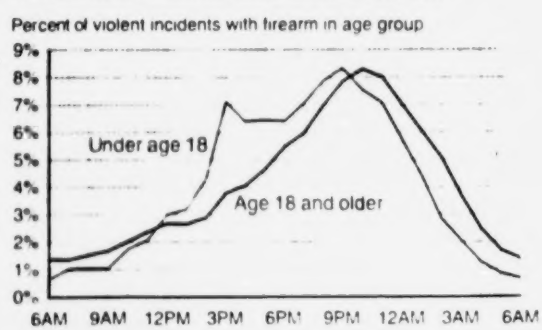
- Even with its greater increase, the female rate in 1997 was only 10% of the male rate.

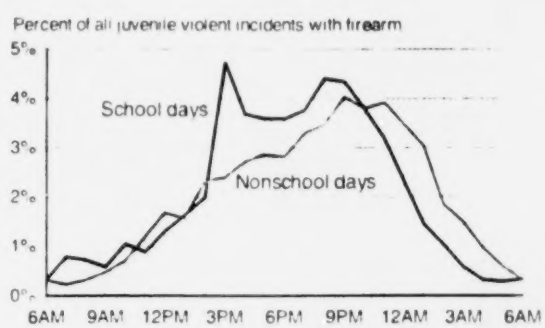
Note: Arrest rates are arrests per 100,000 males or females ages 10–17

Source: Authors' analysis of arrest data from unpublished FBI reports for 1980 through 1994 and the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for 1995, 1996, and 1997 and population data from the Bureau of the Census for 1980 through 1989 from *Current Population Reports*, P25–1095 and for 1990 through 1997 from *Estimates of the population of States by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin: 1990–1997* [machine-readable data files].

In general, the temporal pattern of violent crimes committed by juveniles with firearms is similar to the adult pattern, except for the high proportion of juvenile firearm-involved crimes that occur immediately after school on school days

Violent crime committed with a firearm





Note: Violent crime includes murder, violent sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Data are from 12 States (Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia).

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master files for the years 1991–1996* [machine-readable data files].

1 in 5 juvenile arrestees carried a gun all or most of the time

Gun use and crime among male arrestees/detainees is studied

The National Institute of Justice interviewed a sample of arrested and/or detained individuals during the first 6 months of 1995 to learn about gun acquisition and use. Seven of eleven study sites provided data on juvenile males: Denver, District of Columbia, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Phoenix, St. Louis, and San Diego.

Although sites varied, the juvenile males studied were disproportionately black or Hispanic, and most were age 15 or older. Because 5 of the 7 sites limited the study to juveniles in detention rather than all juveniles arrested, the offense profile for juveniles studied was skewed to more serious offenses (crimes against persons ranged from 15% to 29%). Also, the proportion of juveniles who admitted to current membership in a gang ranged from 2% to 41%.

Juveniles are more likely than arrestees overall to commit a crime with a gun

The proportion of respondents who were charged with a weapons offense ranged from 1% to 12%. Among the juvenile males interviewed, however, 20% said they carried a gun all or most of the time, compared with 14% of arrestees overall.

Juvenile arrestees were nearly twice as likely as arrestees overall to say they had stolen a gun (25% vs. 13%). Gang members and drug sellers were also more likely than other arrestees to have stolen a gun (each about 30%).

Overall, 23% of arrestees who owned a gun had used one in a crime. The proportion was higher for juveniles (33%) and higher still for drug sellers (42%) and gang members (50%).

Arrestees were often the victims of gun violence

Juvenile males and gang members were more likely than arrestees overall to have been shot at. The proportion who said they had been shot at was about 4 in 10 overall, compared with about 5 in 10 for juvenile males and about 8 in 10 for gang members.

Although juveniles were more likely than adults to be shot at, they were not more likely to suffer gunshot injury. Overall, 16% of arrestees reported gunshot injuries.

Arrestees say they carry guns for protection and respect

Two-thirds of respondents said they had a gun for protection/self-defense. Almost one-third of arrestees agreed that, "Your crowd respects you if you have a gun." Among drug sellers and gang members, the proportion agreeing was higher (4 in 10). When asked when using a gun was appropriate, 9% of arrestees agreed that, "It is okay to shoot someone who disrespected you." Among juveniles, the proportion agreeing was double (18%). Among drug sellers, 21% agreed; among gang members, 34% agreed.

More than half of crime guns were recovered from adults ages 25 years or older

In 1996, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms established the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative to trace crime guns (i.e., any firearm illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected to have been used in a crime) recovered by law enforcement. More than 76,000 crime guns were traced from 27 cities during a 1-year period between 1997 and 1998. Almost one-half (44%) of crime guns were recovered from persons under the age of 25; 11% were recovered from youth age 17 or younger.

Age	Percent of crime guns
All	100%
17 or younger	11
18–24	32
25 or older	56

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

4 in 5 recovered firearms were handguns

A handgun was the most common type of recovered firearm traced by law enforcement. Of these, a semiautomatic pistol was the most frequently possessed handgun among all age groups (52%). Semiautomatic pistols were more common among youth under age 18 (58%) and those ages 18–24 (60%) than among persons age 25 or older (47%).

	Age		
Type of gun	17 or younger	18–24	25 or older
Total	100%	100%	100%
Semiautomatic pistol	58	60	47
Revolver	29	24	27
Long gun	12	15	25

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

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A new survey of youth shows that handgun carrying is linked to other problem behavior

A new survey will follow a cohort of youth as they make the transition from school to work

The first wave of the 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY97) interviewed a nationally representative sample of 9,000 youth who were between the ages of 12 and 16 at year-end 1996. The survey asked youth to report whether they had engaged in a variety of deviant and delinquent behaviors, including carrying a handgun. Plans are to interview members of this cohort every 2 years to track changes in delinquent and criminal activity over the life course.

- Youth who had ever used marijuana were more likely to have sold marijuana (24% vs. <1%), carried a handgun (21% vs. 7%) or been in a gang (14% vs. 2%) at some point than youth who never used marijuana.
- Youth who had ever sold marijuana were more likely to have sold hard drugs (i.e., cocaine, LSD, or heroin) (40% vs. 1%), carried a handgun (35% vs. 8%), or been in a gang (24% vs. 4%) than youth who never sold marijuana.
- Active marijuana users (i.e., youth who used marijuana during the month prior to the survey) were more likely to have consumed alcohol (78% vs. 14%) or carried a handgun (12% vs. 2%) during that period than youth who did not use marijuana.
- Youth who had carried a handgun in the last 12 months were also more likely to have been in a gang than youth who did not carry a handgun during this period (15% vs. 1%).

The survey also found that more than half of all 16-year-olds who had ever committed assault, carried a handgun, or belonged to a gang had done so for the first time by age 12. In contrast, less than one-fifth of all 16-year-olds who had ever used marijuana, sold any drugs, or sold hard drugs (i.e., cocaine, LSD, or heroin) had done so for the first time by age 12.

Recent participation (i.e., within the last 12 months or 30 days prior to the interview) in delinquent acts such as carrying a handgun varied by race and ethnicity for males and females

	Males ages 12–16			Females ages 12–16		
Behavior	White	Black	Hispanic	White	Black	Hispanic
Carried a handgun						
Last 12 months	10%	8%	8%	2%	2%	2%
Last 30 days	5	5	4	1	1	1
To school in last 30 days	< 1	1	1	0	0	< 1

- In the year preceding the interview, white males were less likely to have been in a gang than black and Hispanic males but more likely to have carried a gun.

Note: The white and black racial categories do not include youth of Hispanic ethnicity. Hispanic youth can be of any race.

Source: Authors' analysis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997* [machine-readable data file].

Among 15-year-olds, employed youth were significantly more likely to have carried a gun in the last 12 months than unemployed youth

	15-year-olds		16-year-olds	
Behavior	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed	Employed
Carried a handgun				
Last 12 months	5%	8%	7%	6%
Last 30 days	3	4	4	3

Source: Authors' analysis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997* [machine-readable data file].

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For every two youth (ages 0–19) murdered in 1996, one youth committed suicide

7% of all suicides in 1996 involved youth age 19 or younger

FBI data indicate that about 3,900 youth age 19 or younger were murdered in the U.S in 1996. The magnitude of this problem has captured the public's attention, but much less attention has been given to the fact that for every two youth murdered, one youth commits suicide.

The National Center for Health Statistics reported that 30,903 persons committed suicide in the U.S. in 1996. Of these, 7% (2,119) were youth age 19 or younger. Overall, suicides increased 9% between 1980 and 1996. For youth younger than age 15, the increase was 113%. Despite this large increase, these youngest suicide victims accounted for just 1% of all suicides in 1996.

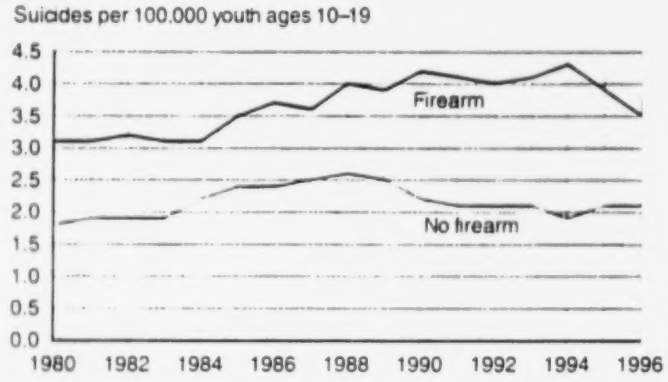
Young suicide victims are disproportionately male and white

Males accounted for 8 in 10 youth suicides; white youth also accounted for 8 in 10 suicides.

	Number of suicides		Suicides per 100,000 youth	
	Ages 10–14	Ages 15–19	Ages 10–14	Ages 15–19
Total	298	1,817	1.6	9.7
Male	222	1,496	2.3	15.6
Female	76	321	0.8	3.5
White	244	1,522	1.6	10.3
Male	179	1,249	2.3	16.3
Female	65	273	0.9	3.8
Nonwhite	54	295	1.4	7.7
Male	43	247	2.2	12.7
Female	11	48	*	2.6

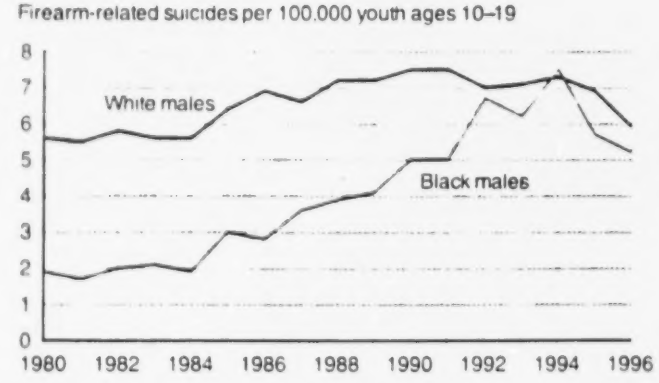
* Too few cases to obtain a reliable rate.

The rate of youth suicides involving a firearm increased 39% between 1980 and 1994, before declining 19% to the 1996 level



Source: Authors' analysis of the National Center for Health Statistics' *1979–1996 data from the compressed mortality file* [unpublished data].

The firearm-related suicide rate for young black males peaked in 1994 at a level higher than the rate for young white males, before declining to the 1996 level



- Between 1994 and 1996, firearm-related suicide rates decreased 19% for young white males and 31% for young black males.
- In 1996, firearm-related suicide rates for young white males declined to mid-1980's levels, while the rate for young black males was more than twice the 1980 rate.
- Changes in firearm-related suicide rates for young black males were similar to homicide patterns for young black males between 1980 and 1996.

Source: Authors' analysis of the National Center for Health Statistics' *1979–1996 data from the compressed mortality file* [unpublished data].

U.S. child homicide and suicide rates exceed rates for other industrialized countries

Rates of firearm-related homicides and suicides are high in the U.S.

A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention compared the homicide and suicide rates for children under age 15 in the U.S. with the rates for several other industrialized countries. Each country reported data for 1 year between 1990 and 1995. U.S. data were reported for 1993. The number of homicides per 100,000 children under age 15 in the U.S. was five times the number in the other countries combined (2.57 vs. 0.51). The rate of child homicides involving a firearm, however, was 16 times greater in the U.S. than in the other countries combined (0.94 vs. 0.06).

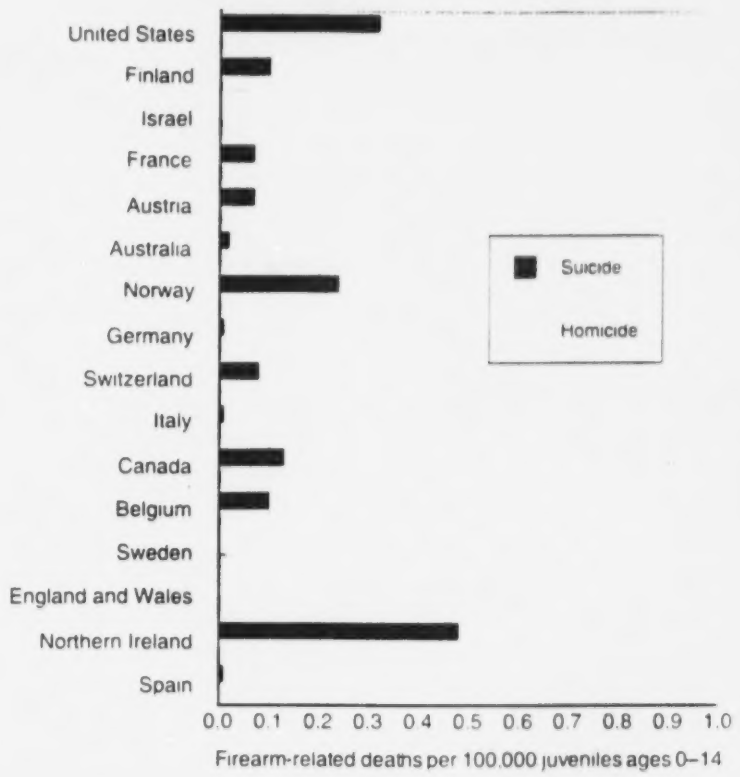
A similar pattern was seen in the suicide rates of children under age 15. Overall, the U.S. suicide rate was twice the rate for the other countries combined (0.55 vs. 0.27). For suicides involving firearms, however, the suicide rate in the U.S. was almost 11 times the rate for the other countries combined (0.32 vs. 0.03).

	Homicide rates*		Suicide rates*	
	U.S.	Foreign	U.S.	Foreign
Ages 0–4	4.10	0.95	0.00	0.00
Firearm	0.43	0.05	0.00	0.00
No firearm	3.67	0.05	0.00	0.00
Ages 5–14	1.75	0.30	0.84	0.40
Firearm	1.22	0.07	0.49	0.05
No firearm	0.53	0.24	0.35	0.35
Ages 0–14	2.57	0.51	0.55	0.27
Firearm	0.94	0.06	0.32	0.03
No firearm	1.63	0.45	0.23	0.24

* Rates are the number of homicides or suicides per 100,000 children in the age group.

Note: Data were provided by Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England and Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, and Taiwan.

The U.S. firearm-related homicide rate for children is more than twice that of Finland, the country with the next highest rate



Note: If both suicide and homicide rates for a country were 0, that country is not displayed on the graph. Data were provided by Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England and Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, and Taiwan.

Source: Authors' adaptation of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Rates of homicide, suicide, and firearm-related death among children—26 industrialized countries.

Homicides involving a firearm were about 10% of all homicides among younger children (ages 0–4) in the U.S. in 1993. In contrast, about two-thirds of U.S. homicides among older children (5–14) involved a firearm. In other countries, firearm-related homicides were less than one-quarter of all homicides in either age group.

While nonfirearm-related suicide rates were the same among older children in the U.S. and other countries (0.35), firearm-related suicide rates in the U.S. were 10 times greater than those in other countries (0.49 vs. 0.05).

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Sources

Information for this Bulletin was taken/adapted from chapters 2, 3, and 5 of *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*. For a full listing of sources for these chapters, see pages 49, 84, and 140 of the *National Report*.

Resources

The 1999 OJJDP publication *Promising Strategies To Reduce Gun Violence* (253 pp., NCJ 173950) presents profiles of 60 demonstrated or promising programs and strategies that address the problem of gun violence. *Promising Strategies* also examines the problem of gun violence from a national perspective (including current trends) and discusses the process of developing a solution. Each program profile in the publication covers program type, goals, target group, target area, and contact information. The profiles are arranged in five categories: comprehensive gun violence reduction strategies, strategies to interrupt sources of illegal guns, strategies to deter illegal gun possession and carrying, strategies to respond to illegal use of guns, and education initiatives and alternative prevention strategies. The publication also includes a section on resources for research, technical assistance, and education; geographical and alphabetical program indexes; and a matrix of participating agencies. *Promising Strategies To Reduce Gun Violence* is available online from the OJJDP Web site (www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) under the Publications section or can be ordered from OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (e-mail puborder@ncjrs.org; call 800–638–8736; or write to the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849–6000).

Answers to frequently asked questions about juvenile justice statistics as well as periodic updates of data presented in *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report* are available on the Internet in the OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book, which can be accessed through the OJJDP home page at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org through the JJ Facts & Figures prompt.

Also available from OJJDP is the *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report* CD–ROM. With the CD–ROM, users can view the full report in a portable document format (PDF). The CD–ROM also provides a comprehensive "educator's kit" that includes the following: statistical information from full-page, presentation-ready graphs (also available for display in Microsoft Powerpoint); data for the graphs (also available in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets); more than 40 source documents in PDF; and links to government Web sites to obtain more information.

For information on OJJDP initiatives related to the reduction of juvenile crime, violence, and victimization, contact the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC) at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org or call 800–638–8736.

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